NEW FILES RELEASED ON KENNEDY DEATH

Records Disclose Secret Service's Inquiry Into the Assassination Concentrated on Cuban Aspect

NYT 12/22/77

WASHINGTON, Dec. 21 (UPI)—The Secret Service investigation into the assassination of President Kennedy was heavily preoccupied with possible Cuban and even Chinese Communist involvement, according to documents released today.

Hundreds of pages of Secret Service files given United Press International under a Freedom of Information request show that, aside from a routine background investigation of Lee Harvey Oswald, the accused assassin, its inquiry dealt almost entirely with the Cuban angle.

The Secret Service said that the files represented all but 75 to 100 documents it had on the assassination. Those were exempted under secrecy provisions of the law

The investigation apparently concentrated on the Cuban angle because of threats against President Kennedy from Cubans in Miami, where he visited the week before his murder in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

Nowhere in the material, however, is there any indication that the Secret Service was able to link Oswald with a Cuban conspiracy.

Among the other items in the documents were the following:

¶The Federal Bureau of Investigation monitored Oswald's activities for three years before the assassination but never told the Secret Service about him. The Former Secret Service chief, James J. Rawley, raised serious questions about this slip-up in communications, which, he said, "made it clear" criteria needed to be re-evaluated for identifying people who might be dangerous to a president.

¶The head of the Secret Service's White House detail, Gerald A. Behn, said in a memorandum after the assassination that in at least two motorcades Mr. Kennedy had discouraged agents who tried to block people from approaching his limousine.

¶Secret Service memorandums indicated that its officials discovered some possible errors or indiscretions in protecting Mr. Kennedy in Dallas, and re-evaluated the manner in which a President should be guarded. They suggested that they needed more manpower.

'Chicom-Castro Plot'

Perhaps the most intriguing document was from the special agent in charge of the Miami office, describing an "alleged Chicom-Castro Plot." Chicom is a term for Chinese Communists.

"This office received information from a Western diplomat on 6 December 1963 which alleges that the assassination of President Kennedy was the result of a plot prepared and executed jointly by the Chicoms and Fidel Castro through intermediaries," the report begins. The diplomat, who was not named in the report, is quoted as saying that he received his information through a source described as "very good."

The report listed the following "basic ingredients" of the allegation:

¶"Reportedly Fidel Castro is extremely worried about the current probings taking place into the assassination of President Kennedy and the possible finding that may ensue.

¶"The plot to assassinate President Kennedy was arranged by Chicoms and Cuban sympathizers who have been provisionally jailed in Cuba to prevent any indiscretions. The diplomat's source himself is fearful that his arrest is imminent.

¶"There appears to be no Soviet participation in the plot because at this time the Soviets are too close to the Americans."

'Intermediaries' in Scheme

The report said that a Cuban and a Mexican-American living in Dallas were "intermediaries" in the plot.

"Though this office cannot at this juncture vouch for the reliability or veracity of the information, steps have been initiated to develop the information further and identify the original source," the report ended. There was no reference to the matter elsewhere in the documents.

There also was a report on preparations leading up to Mr. Kennedy's visit to Florida Nov. 18, 1963. It reviewed special security precautions taken by the Secret Service because of threats believed to have come from the Cuban community in Miami. A postcard received by the Miami police and postmarked Nov. 16, said, "The Cuban Commandos have the BOMBS ready for killing JFK."

The Secret Service was particularly interested in a speech made by Fidel Castro, the Cuban Prime Minister, on Sept. 9, 1963. Mr. Castro warned that "United States leaders would be in danger if they helped in any attemp to do away with leaders of Cuba."

When the Secret Service tried to link the speech to the assassination, however, it found but one connection. A report of the speech was carried in New Orleans newspapers at the time Oswald lived there as an active member of the radical Fair Play for Cuba Committee.

Oswald's work for this group was the only link to Cuba substantiated in the Secret Service's investigation of the Cuba angle.

Another Secret Service memorandum, on Nov. 29, a week after the assassination, said that if there was a Cuban conspiracy information had been received "that the party responsible for carrying out any action on the part of Fidel Castro undoubtedly was Quinten Pino Machado, a Cuban terrorist used by Castro to carry out any Castro action."

This information was gained from a source identified as "3-11-48" who said Mr. Machado was a former Cuban delegate to the United Nations, then Cuban Ambassador to Nicaragua, and an expert on bombs and explosives.

The informer that said Mr. Machado once bragged that he had attempted to assassinate Dr. Enrique Heurtas, identified later by the Secret Service as a guest at a dinner for Mr. Kennedy in Miami the week before the President was killed.

The vehicle by which the Secret Service records were obtained, the Freedom of Information Act, allows private citizens, news organizations or any other interest groups to file a request with a Government agency if a reasonable description is provided. There are nine exempt categories of information, and among these are classified national security documents, trade secrets and personal information about individuals.